Irradiation of Food

*177. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that irradiation of food leads to the formation of unique radiolytic products which are mainly similar to these that occur also in other processes such as barbecuing and canning, etc;

(b) whether it is a fact that about 10 per cent of the unique radiolytic products are totally different, the effects of which are unknown; and

(c) whether a moratorium on Food Irradiation would be imposed till such time as the full safety of Irradiation is established beyond doubt?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Government are aware of the reports. However, the yields of the radiolytic products are very low and are of no consequence to the safety of food. Moreover, these products are found to be present in foods processed by other methods as well.

(b) The unique radiolytic products are in such low amounts and characteristically transient by nature and their effects on animals are not exactly known. These chemicals are not traceable with best available techniques in normal food or food irradiated at dose levels allowed in India.

(c) The wholesomeness and safety aspects of irradiated food have been established by international agencies. The method has been subjected to a close toxicological examination. There is no justification for imposing a moratorium on irradiated food. Food irradiation has been cleared in India only after taking all these factors into account.

Banning of Spurious and Substandard Drugs

*178. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY: SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report in the Patriot dated January 14, 1989 captioned "Ignorance about banned drugs" alleging that several drugs which have been banned by the Drug Controller to be sold in different parts of the Country and that the menace of spurious and sub-standard drugs is widely prevalent; and

(b) if so, what specific steps have been taken to prevent the sale of banned spurious and substandard drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

Information available with the Government reveals that no formulation covered under the banned list of 27 is reported to be marketed except for fixed dose combination of Chloramphenicol with Streptomycin and fixed dose combination of Corticosteroid with other drugs for internal use, for which certain manufacturers obtained stay against the ban order from different Courts of Law.

Government have initiated steps to get the stay orders vacated and also for the dismissal of the Writ Petitions.

The drugs which are banned are published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary for information of all concerned. Copies of the Gazette are made available by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to all the State Governments,